

## HOMER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

28 South Main Street  
Homer, NY 13077  
607-749-2604

### WEDDING POLICIES AND FEES

#### INTRODUCTION

We hold that marriage is a sacred and joyous covenant ordained of God from the beginning of creation. We support and honor New York's marriage equality law, enacted in 2011, and we strive to do all we can approach your wedding with reverence, to encourage you in the fulfillment of your marriage vows, and provide a beautiful setting for the occasion. To these ends, we offer the following policies and guidelines for weddings held in the Homer Congregational Church.

#### BUILDING USE

Reserve the date and time of your wedding with the Church Office as soon as possible by filling out and returning the *Wedding Information Sheet*. No dates are confirmed until we receive the *Wedding Information Sheet* and *deposit* (if applicable). Your submission of the *Wedding Information Sheet* signifies your willingness to follow the church's wedding policies.

The wedding rehearsal is usually held the evening before the ceremony, and will be scheduled with the minister. The rehearsal will normally take no more than one hour, after which time the church will be closed.

Wedding ceremonies are most often held in the sanctuary. In some cases, the wedding may be held in the Russell Fellowship Room or the Memorial Garden. The church will be closed and locked 1 ½ hours from the scheduled start of the wedding. The wedding party may choose to dress for the wedding at the church –speak with the minister about this option. Receptions may also be held in the Russell Fellowship Room or the Memorial Garden. Separate policies and fees apply to receptions. **Alcoholic beverages and smoking are not permitted on the premises.** Speak to the pastor if you are interested in holding a reception at the church.

#### PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

The pastor will work with you to not only plan your wedding, but also to help you prepare for the partnership of marriage. All couples married at this church by the pastor are required to meet with the pastor for pre-marital counseling prior to the wedding. *It is your responsibility to be available and make arrangements to meet with the pastor.* Except under extremely rare circumstances, the requirement of pre-marital counseling holds as much importance as obtaining the marriage license.

#### FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

You are responsible for arranging for floral decorations, and flowers for the wedding party. Please do not tape bows to the pews; use bow hangers supplied by the church instead. The church does not own an aisle runner. Aisle runners can usually be purchased from a florist or wedding supply store. No rice or birdseed may be thrown inside the building; and outdoors please use *birdseed only*. We prefer that you use bubbles, keeping them outdoors. Bubbles are available from florists or wedding suppliers.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOTAPING, AUDIO TAPING

Guests are asked to not take digital and flash photographs during the ceremony. A designated photographer may take photos from the rear of the sanctuary during the service, and may photograph from other locations during the processional and recessional marches, as well as before and after the service. The pastor can be available for photos briefly after the ceremony. You may videotape the ceremony with a camera in a stationary position in the balcony at the rear of the sanctuary, or from the outermost aisle, under the balcony.

## BULLETINS

Information for the bulletin including, order of service, names of participants, music titles, scripture readings must be reviewed by the pastor and submitted two weeks prior to the wedding. Wedding bulletins can be printed in the church office free of charge. Couples may supply the bulletin covers and paper.

## STAFF

### **Pastor**

The pastor is ultimately responsible for the wedding ceremony, and will preside at all weddings which take place in this church, unless other arrangements are approved by the pastor. The pastor's services to the couple include pre-marital counseling, assistance in planning all aspects of the wedding service, conducting the rehearsal and officiating at the wedding, travel within ten miles for the wedding, and availability for conversation and counsel after the wedding day. If you want to invite another minister to co-officiate at your wedding, this must be discussed with the pastor of the Homer Congregational Church. In addition, the pastor must be contacted by the other minister out of professional courtesy and for the benefit of all concerned.

### **Wedding Coordinator**

The wedding coordinator is an extremely valuable resource person for the couple. She will be in contact with the couple prior to the wedding date, and is present at both the rehearsal and the wedding. She assists the wedding party the day of the wedding. She directs the ushers in their duties and makes sure the bridal party is in place. She is also available to answer any questions concerning etiquette or proper procedure and customs.

### **Organist**

The church organist plays at all weddings in this church, unless other arrangements are approved by the minister. The couple should discuss musical requests with the minister and may be contacted by the organist to plan the music for the ceremony. Notify the pastor if you wish to have additional musicians or vocalists. The organist helps plan the service music, attends the rehearsal, rehearses with other musicians or vocalists when appropriate and plays at the wedding.

### **Sexton**

The sexton is responsible for setting up the church for the wedding and cleaning and re-setting it up afterwards. The sexton will open and close the church for the rehearsal and the ceremony, turn on heat, fans and lights, and clear snow as needed.

FEE SCHEDULE

**Building Use Fees for Weddings**

(Building use fees are for non-church members only.)

Wedding in the Sanctuary	\$200.00
Wedding in the Russell Fellowship Room	100.00
Wedding in the Memorial Garden	100.00

Staff Fees

Staff fees apply to all weddings.

Pastor	\$ 250.00
Organist	125.00
Organist rehearsal with soloist	50.00
Sexton	50.00
Wedding Coordinator	50.00

Pastor's fees are to be paid to the pastor no later than the third meeting. All other fees and honoraria are to be paid prior at the time of the rehearsal. You may pay with cash or individual checks made out to each staff person.

Weddings scheduled for holiday weekends will add 50% to all fees and honoraria.

Couples will be billed extra for any damages done to church property or facilities by the wedding party or guests.

**Church Staff:**

*Pastor:* Rev. Vicki Burtson

*Sexton:* Gary Harrington

*Organist:* James N. Shultes

*Wedding Coordinator:* Shirley Osterhoudt

Contact Information:

Church Office: (607) 749-2604, email: office@homercc.org

## GETTING MARRIED IN NEW YORK STATE

Complete information about getting married in New York is available online at the New York State Department of Health website. Below is some general useful information.

### **Marriage License**

Marriage licenses are issued by town or city clerks in New York State at a cost of \$40. The marriage ceremony cannot take place for 24 hours after the license is issued. The marriage license is valid for 60 days.

***You must bring your marriage license to the wedding rehearsal. The minister will take the license, complete it and return it to the town or city. About two to four weeks after the wedding, the issuing clerk will send you a Certificate of Marriage Registration, which ensures that your marriage is on file with the state. Couples who do not receive a Certificate of Marriage Registration within four weeks of the wedding should contact the town or city clerk who issued the license.***

### **Requirements**

No premarital physical examination or blood test is required in New York State.

If both applicants are at least 18 years of age, no consents are required.

Applicants must establish proof of age with at least one of the following: Birth Certificate, Baptismal Record, Naturalization Record, Census Record.

Applicants must also establish proof of identity with one of the following: Driver's License, Passport, Employment Photo ID, Immigration Record.

For information on changing names, previous marriage records, familial restrictions, and more, see the NY State Health Dept website.

*(revised 2-15-16)*